

# Heritage Foods™

*Premium Organic Produce in Glass*

Tuesday, May 15, 2001

Keith Jones  
Program Manager  
USDA-AMS-TM-NOP  
Room 2945-South Building  
P.O. Box 96456  
Washington, DC 20090-6456

Dear Mr. Jones:

My name is Ken Van Der Veen and I am the President of Heritage Foods, a company that provides various Organic products to the retail markets across the United States and Canada.

I am writing you on behalf of the petition J.R. Wood Inc. has submitted to keep Organic IQF Peaches in the market place.

Mr. Jones, I got into the organic business because I believed in the practice of organic farming and the benefits organic products have to offer. There are many people in the marketplace who believe as I do and would like the opportunity to continue buying their favorite summer fruit year round - Organic IQF Peaches.

I currently purchase around 100,000 lbs. of IOF Organic Peaches from J.R. Wood Inc. because they provide a product and services that I CAN'T get any where else in the market place. There is not one grower, processor or manufacture in this country who can provide us with sliced organic peaches without the use of potassium hydroxide. I have looked and tried various methods, from hand peeling to mechanical peeling, and in all cases the finish product was unsellable.

Heritage Foods and its customers do not have a choice when it comes to Organic Peaches, we either purchase IQF Organic Peaches processed by J.R. Wood or we shut down the peach production line and stop providing

consumers with organic peaches.

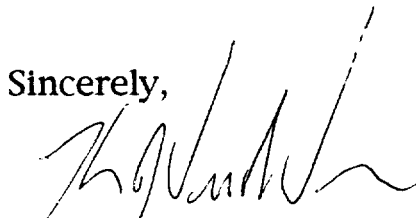
I will leave the potassium hydroxide argument to J.R. Wood and their petition, there is no need for duplication.

However, I feel it is important for you to understand that there is more at stake here then the questionable use of potassium hydroxide. Like the livelihood of the farmers who grow organic peaches and their families or the jobs we provide in the manufacturing of organic peach products.

I would like to ask you to please not only consider the valid arguments that J.R. Wood makes in regards to the use of potassium hydroxide but also consider the chain effect it will have on many lives. Attached you will find a letter I received last week from a consumer who wrote Heritage Foods, I receive many letters from consumers thanking no only this company but the farmers who take the time and effort to provide them with products they believe in.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,



Ken Van Der Veen

*Referenced attachment  
was not enclosed.*

*RHW  
5/21/01*